

ACTION SCA-00

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AF-00	AID-00	INL-00	DOT-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	DHSE-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00
	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	MOFM-00	MOF-00
	VCIE-00	NEA-00	NRC-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	OES-00	OIC-00
	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00	GIWI-00	P-00
	ISNE-00	DOHS-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	T-00	NCTC-00
	FMP-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	FA-00	SRAP-00	SWCI-00	PESU-00	SRMC-00	SRND-00
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EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
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AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC 1263  
SECDEF WASHDC 1180  
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC  
DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION USNATO

UNCLAS ASTANA 001131

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, S/SRAP, EUR/RUS, DRL, H  
PLEASE PASS TO TRAVELING PARTY OF UNDER SECRETARY BURNS AND NSC  
SENIOR ADVISOR MCFAUL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [KNNP](#) [AF](#) [RS](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: CONGRESSMAN FALEOMAVAEGA HEARS, "PLEASE TELL  
PRESIDENT OBAMA TO VISIT"

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: During Congressman Eni Faleomavaega's July 2-3  
visit to Astana,

- President Nazarbayev told him that he has been urging Russian Prime Minister Putin and President Medvedev to seize the opportunities President Obama is offering for a new U.S.-Russia partnership;
- Foreign Minister Tazhin said Kazakhstan will provide increasingly important economic and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan; and
- Senate Chairman Tokayev thanked the Congressman for understanding that Kazakhstan is on a democratic path with respect for human rights, and urged that President Obama visit Kazakhstan, which would be seen throughout the greater region as an enormously significant geostrategic gesture. END SUMMARY.

13. (U) Representative Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa) was in Astana July 2-3. He met with President Nursultan Nazarbayev, State Secretary Kanat Saudabayev informally (several times), Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin, and Senate Chairman Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev. Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United States, Erlan Idrissov, returned to Astana for the visit and participated in all the meetings. All senior Kazakhstani officials greeted Faleomavaega as a long-standing and highly respected friend of Kazakhstan. He also attended sessions of the third triennial Congress of World and Traditional Religions.

## FALEOMAVAEGA'S KEY POINTS

14. (SBU) Faleomavaega's key points for his interlocutors included:

- his great respect for President Nazarbayev's early renunciation of Kazakhstan's nuclear status and the special bond that unites Pacific Islanders and Kazakhstanis because both suffered greatly, and continue to suffer to this day, because of U.S. and USSR nuclear tests and their tragic uncompensated human impact on the populations, as well as his adamant support for global nuclear disarmament;
- his acknowledgement and praise that Kazakhstan has become the sixth largest grain exporter in the world;
- in the run-up to the July 6-7 Obama-Medvedev summit in Moscow, his dismay that some in official Washington still have a Cold-War mindset when, in fact, the United States and Russia should be partners, not adversaries;
- his strong satisfaction that President Obama is winding down U.S. involvement in Iraq and focusing on Afghanistan, which is the key challenge that must be met;
- his praise for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a potentially stabilizing force in the greater region, especially if India becomes a full member;
- his understanding that Kazakhstan is on a democratic path and needs time to build its institutions and traditions to protect human rights; and
- his intention to establish a Congressional Central Asia Caucus.

## PRESIDENT NAZARBAYEV

15. (SBU) Congressman Faleomavaega introduced President Nazarbayev to Paul Pieper, President of the East Europe Representative Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and thanked the president for including that church in his Congress of Traditional and World Religions. Pieper, speaking in both Kazakh and Russian, presented the tenets of his church, including strong support for traditional family values, for education, and for the authority of

existing governments, as well as prohibitions against alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics. President Nazarbayev interjected, "You don't drink? There are places in Russia where they live to be over 100 and drink like fish!" Then Nazarbayev chuckled and said, "I hope you understand that's a joke."

16. (SBU) Nazarbayev thanked Pieper for attending the Congress and asked that he and the Congressman use their influence in Washington to remove Kazakhstan from the Jackson-Vanik legislation. He said, "All the Jewish representatives at this Congress thank me for our strong record against anti-Semitism and commiserate that it's strange we are still subject to out-dated Cold-War legislation in the United States."

17. (SBU) President Nazarbayev also praised at length President Obama's speeches in Prague (non-proliferation) and Cairo (relations with the Muslim world) and said, "We are greatly encouraged by your young new president and his impressive government. We sincerely want to work productively with him. We want him to succeed."

18. (SBU) Nazarbayev told Faleomavaega that he speaks frequently with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President Dmitriy Medvedev. He said, "I strongly urge them to take advantage of the new openings Obama is offering. I tell them they should seek areas of agreement where they can build a strong partnership with the United States."

## FOREIGN MINISTER TAZHIN

19. (SBU) The foreign minister, speaking idiomatic English, warmly praised Congressman Faleomavaega for his September 2006 speech in Washington during Nazarbayev's visit that "set the standard" for respectful partnership in non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

¶10. (SBU) The Congressman asserted firmly, "The Cold War is over!," and advocated strongly a productive partnership with Russia. He lamented the "misguided" U.S. invasion of Iraq and praised President Obama for his strong focus on Afghanistan. He deplored the Russian invasion of Georgia, and pledged to work to promote a stronger U.S. partnership with Kazakhstan and all of Central Asia. He advocated Central Asian unity to build stronger bloc relations with the West.

¶11. (SBU) Tazhin admitted he and his colleagues are frustrated because official Washington in general - "not the experts, of course" - still lump all the Central Asian countries together as "the 'stans" and don't really seem to understand the vast differences among the five countries, especially the enormous disparity in economic and political development. He said President Nazarbayev is firmly committed to unity in the region but understands he must go slowly, "step by step," because of the "contradictions among the leaders."

¶12. (SBU) Tazhin praised the United States for initially overthrowing the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 - "in 1999 and 2000, we were facing real and imminent threats" - and for the U.S. recommitment under President Obama to "getting Afghanistan right." He acknowledged that a stable and prosperous Afghanistan is strongly in the interest of Kazakhstan. He noted that Kazakhstan's military assistance in Afghanistan "cannot be significant" but pledged Kazakhstan will provide increasingly important humanitarian and economic support. He advocated that the United States take a "long-term political view" in Afghanistan because, he said, he believes Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai "will not be around much longer. We cannot tie ourselves to him and his failed government."

¶13. (SBU) Tazhin told Congressman Faleomavaega that an improved U.S.-Russia relationship will be strongly in Kazakhstan's favor. He said, "We choose - and we have no other choice than to have - a pragmatic relationship with Russia because it is a strategic necessity for us. At the same time, we strongly value and seek to enhance our relationship with the United States. Please do what you

can to help us in Washington."

¶14. (SBU) Tazhin warmly praised Faleomavaega's life work and told him that it is Kirkegaardian: "You combine being, mind, and existence."

SENATE CHAIRMAN TOKAYEV

¶15. (SBU) Tokayev, too, warmly praised Faleomavaega's September 2006 speech in Washington during President Nazarbayev's visit and cited it as a "touchstone of our nations' bilateral relationship and commitment to nuclear disarmament." He added, "Thank you for truly understanding our realities and not just believing the prejudicial headlines." The Congressman said he deeply regrets that the world does not bother to understand the real Kazakhstan and all that it has achieved during its short period of independence. Both agreed that Central Asia will continue to grow significantly in importance for the United States and on the world stage in the next several years.

¶16. (SBU) Senate Chairman Tokayev said, "I want to tell you frankly, what we need most of all is for President Obama to visit Kazakhstan, as he told me in Istanbul he would do. That would be an enormous symbolic gesture that would reverberate throughout the greater region. It would be seismic." The Congressman said he would indeed pass this message personally to President Obama.

¶17. (SBU) Faleomavaega told Tokayev, "I continue to argue with my colleagues about human rights in Kazakhstan. I tell them you are only 18 years old. It took the United States 150 years to grant voting rights to African-Americans!" Tokayev replied, "Thank you sincerely for understanding. We are irrevocably committed to democracy and human rights, but it is indeed a process."

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